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CONTEMPORARY FORMS OF SLAVERY

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Prevention of the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, submitted pursuant to Sub-Commission resolution 1998/19

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Introduction

The Commission on Human Rights adopted the Programme of Action for the Prevention of the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography in its resolution 1992/74 and requested the Sub-Commission to submit to it every two years a progress report on the implementation of the Programme of Action by all States.

In its resolution 1998/19, the Sub-Commission requested the Secretary-General to invite all States to inform the Working Group of measures adopted to implement the Programme of Action and to submit a report thereon to the Sub-Commission at its fifty-first session and to the Commission at its fifty-sixth session.

In order that the Working Group might examine this matter at its twenty-fourth session, the secretariat, on 5 January 1999, sent notes verbales to Governments requesting the desired information. As of 2 June 1999, a reply had been received from Mexico.

REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

Mexico

[Original: SPANISH]
[20 April 1999]

1. In order to comply with the commitments it made at the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Stockholm, Sweden, in August 1996, and to give effect to the recommendations formulated by Mrs. Ofelia Calcetas, Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, during her visit to Mexico in November 1997, the Government of Mexico, through the National System for the Integrated Development of the Family (DIF) and under the auspices of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), has adopted the Inter-Agency Plan of Action to Prevent, Deal With and Eradicate the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, which is annexed hereto 1/ and in which Federal Government and legislative departments and bodies and non-governmental organizations are taking part.

2. The Inter-Agency Plan of Action to Prevent, Deal With and Eradicate the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children was submitted at the seminar on "Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: International Experiences and Plan of Action for Mexico", which was organized by DIF and UNICEF in August 1998 and in which Mr. Vitit Muntarbhorn, the first Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, took part.

1/ The annex may be consulted in the secretariat files.

3. The formal establishment of the National Commission took place on 24 November 1998 in the context of the Second National Congress on Child Abuse. In addition, the Veracruz State Commission to Prevent, Deal With and Eradicate the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children was set up by Executive Decree.

4. The National Commission's functions include:

Promoting a wide variety of activities coordinated with the various levels of Government, private groups and non-governmental organizations taking part in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in order to prevent, deal with and eradicate this social problem;

Promoting the establishment of an information system to identify and define the characteristics and qualitative aspects of the problem, as well as its dimensions and magnitude, with a view to setting quantitative goals;

Proposing amendments, additions and new legal provisions to federal and State legislative bodies, particularly those responsible for protecting child victims of commercial sexual exploitation;

Promoting the dissemination of information on and increasing awareness of this problem;

Setting up groups of experts to carry out work in areas to be determined;

Calling on citizens to take part in eradicating this problem;

Promoting public discussion mechanisms to analyse and draft legislative proposals.

5. The Inter-Agency National Commission, which is responsible for implementing the Plan, has held three meetings; at the third meeting, the following working groups or sub-committees were set up:

(i) Legislation;

(ii) Diagnosis and information;

(iii) Training and awareness;

(iv) Monitoring and supervision;

(v) Design and development of intervention, recovery and rehabilitation models.

6. The work the National Commission has done so far includes the following:

Legislation

7. On 12 December 1998, the Chamber of Deputies adopted a bill to amend the Penal Code for the Federal District in respect of non-federal offences and for

the entire Republic in respect of federal offences for the purpose of making child pornography a crime and punishing child prostitution more harshly. The bill was submitted to the Senate of the Republic for consideration and adoption.

8. In the State of Campeche, a bill to amend the State Penal Code was drafted to make child pornography a crime; it is under consideration by the State Congress.

Activities relating to the administration of justice in connection with the protection of child victims from any form of sexual exploitation

9. The Office of the Attorney-General and the National System for the Integrated Development of the Family concluded a cooperation agreement to promote the establishment of agencies specializing in cases involving children and organized training courses for members of the prosecution service and the criminal investigation police with a view to increasing the awareness of justice officials who help child victims and making their work more effective.

10. As a result of this inter-agency commitment, the number of specialized agencies throughout the national territory has increased to 20.

Diagnosis and information

11. Working under the auspices of the Inter-American Children's Institute for the purpose of determining the magnitude of the problem of child prostitution, the National System for the Integrated Development of the Family proposed that the non-governmental organization, Espacios de Desarrollo Integral A.C. (EDIAC), should conduct a field investigation of commercial sexual exploitation in Mexico.

12. The investigation was based on information dating from 1996 until the present and, in addition to child prostitution, it focused on related problems, such as family violence, migration and street children, and used a questionnaire to find out what information was available on the basis of the work of government agencies, international cooperation organizations and non-governmental organizations.

Awareness campaigns

13. Based on the guidelines of the World Tourism Organization and the International Federation of Womens' Travel Agencies, the Tourism Department designed a pamphlet to explain the prohibition on sexual tourism in Mexico to foreign tourists. The pamphlet will be published shortly by the national DIF and UNICEF.

14. The Plan of Action to Prevent, Deal With and Eradicate the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children is a joint undertaking by agencies and non-governmental organizations which should be consolidated in the coming months and is a commitment by the Government to the adoption of effective measures to eradicate the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Mexico.